

**Progress Report**  
**Initiative to Transition the AAEP to a Community-Based**  
**Management and Governance Structure and Strengthen the**  
**Mayor's Council on African American Elders**

*September 15 through October 31, 2003*

**Project Background**

The Mayor's Council on African American Elders (the Council) and the Seattle Human Services Department, Aging and Disability Services (ADS) initiated the current efforts in September 2003. The primary goals are to strengthen the Council through effective member recruitment and retention and develop a plan for the transition of the AAEP to a community-based management and governance structure. The current project timeline is September 15 through January 31, 2004. This report provides progress on project goals for the period September 15 through October 31, 2003.

**Key Objectives and Activities**

1. Get agreement on project objectives
2. Brief executive sponsors, partners and key stakeholders
3. Convene decision making and working groups: Executive Sponsors (HSD Director, Director, Public Health, ADS Director, MCAAE Chair), Design Team (Council representative, ADS staff and Consultant) and Steering Committee
4. Draft a comprehensive description of the AAEP, including services and service model
5. Secure statement of support for project from Executive Sponsors
6. Initiate Council recruitment process
7. Clarify needs for collection of data
8. Improve internal and external communications among stakeholders

**Accomplishments for the Period**

1. Project goals are clarified. They are to:
  - Strengthen the MCAAE through implementation of effective member recruitment and retention policies and procedures and recruitment of new Council members
  - Develop plans for a transition of the AAEP to a well-conceived and managed community-based management and governance structure
  - Develop long-range plans for the governance and management of the AAEP
2. Project plan approved by ADS, MCAAE and the Steering Committee
3. Convened a diverse Steering Committee that includes Council members, ADS staff, Public Health Staff and community representatives
  - The first meeting of the Steering Committee was held October 29. The meeting was attended by 10 ADS staff, Public Health Staff, Council members and community representatives. The second meeting is scheduled for November 5.

4. The HDS Director, AAEP Partners and Council members were briefed at September 19 Council Meeting.
5. Developed and approved a job description for members of Steering Committee
6. AAEP Partners and Council members were briefed at the October 17 Council meeting
7. Developed and presented processes and forms for Council recruitment at the October 17 Council meeting
8. Conducted a session on effective communications for the Council at the October 17 meeting
9. Held weekly Design Team meetings since beginning of project
10. Identified a list of 41 potential MCAAE Council members

## **Key Next Steps**

Over the next month, committees and teams will focus on the following issues and activities:

1. Complete a comprehensive program description of the AAEP
2. Clarify data collection needs
3. Establish regular briefings for Executive Sponsors
4. Provide regular project updates for partners, staff and stakeholders
5. Establish Council sub-committee for recruitment and retention and implement recruitment process
6. Design and implement a stakeholder survey
7. Brief and exchange of ideas with Senior Services staff on the transition project
8. Develop clear criteria and process for selecting "*affiliate nonprofit agency*"
9. Draft a model "*operating agreement*" for affiliate nonprofit agency
10. Develop index for project plan narrative

## **Summary and Highlights**

After six weeks, the project is making substantial progress towards the stated goals. As reflected in this report, as of October 31, we have been successful in organizing a knowledgeable, skillful and dynamic Steering Committee to assist with this project. This diverse team includes ADS staff, Partnership staff and Council members, as well as community stakeholders.

Significant progress is being made in clarifying the benefits of the project and addressing the legitimate concerns of all stakeholder groups. This work has been greatly enhanced by the participation of community representatives on the Steering Committee. They have been particularly helpful in ensuring that our discussions are practical and reflect the potential impact of proposed strategies on community stakeholders.

The project presents the usual challenges of a change effort, including limited time, effective coordination, clear communications, uncertainty and stakeholder resistance. These challenges are made more difficult because of the high number of stakeholders that may be impacted by the change and the important and critical interest of individuals and groups in the outcome of the AAEP transition. Thus far, the ADS staff, the Design Team and the Steering Committee has been resourceful and creative in meeting these challenges.